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SCANDINAVIAN TEXT-BOOKS AND PEDAGOGICAL PUBLICATIONS DEALING WITH FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Two text-editions by Professor George T. Flom which have been announced in an earlier number of this publication will soon be issued. Bjørnson's *Synnøve Solbakken*, edited with an introduction, notes, and a vocabulary, is in press and will be published about March 25, 1918. Ibsen's *Et Dukkehjem*, with similar equipment, is announced to follow soon after. Both books will give the text in the new spelling. The publisher is the Free Church Book Concern of Minneapolis.

A previously announced text-edition of Bjørnson's *En fallit*, prepared by Professor J. A. Holvik, is now in press and will be issued shortly by the Augsburg Publishing House of Minneapolis.

A recent addition to the equipment for the teaching of Swedish is entitled *Svensk diktning, I* (Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Illinois, 1917, pp. 211, 75 cents). The volume contains thirty-one selections from nine poets from Dalin to Stagnelius. The text, including brief literary introductions (in Swedish) to each poet, fills eighty pages. The literary introductions are by Professor Jules Mauritzson; his was no doubt also the task of making the selection. The volume is equipped with a vocabulary and notes prepared by Ernst W. Olson. A review of this book will appear in a future number of this publication. Volume II of *Svensk diktning* will follow shortly.

In its series of text-books for *Public and Parochial Schools*, the Augustana Book Concern has very recently issued *Tredje läseboken, För skolan och hemmet*, utarbetad av Jules Mauritzson (1917, pp. 336, 65 cents). The text, in poetry and prose, is divided into (1) Blandade stycken, (2) Sveriges folk i äldre och nyare tid, (3) Från Amerika. A large number of the selections are from Swedish *belles lettres*. The volume contains abundant illustrations. In its present form the reader contains only the text, but it is the plan of the publishers to issue in the near future an edition with notes and a vocabulary by Ernst W. Olson. The review of Mauritzson's book will be withheld until this school-edition has appeared.

Many of our readers have no doubt through the Swedish American Press learned that the Augustana Book Concern of Rock Island, Illinois, has purchased the business of the Engberg-Holmberg Publishing Company of Chicago. Consequently four text-books for the study of Swedish in American schools have been transferred to the Augustana Book Concern, namely: George T. Flom's edition of Tegnér's *Frithiofs saga*, Elmquist's *Swedish Grammar*, *Swedish Phonology*, and *Swedish Reader* (the last-named in press). The *Swedish Reader* will be issued at an early date. The Augustana Book Concern now controls eleven of our Swedish text-books, including two in press but not including the three volumes of the *Series for Public and Parochial Schools*.

Under the caption *Why Teach and Study German in Public Schools* the September (1917) number of *Monatshefte für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik* contains a statement of nine reasons (from a circular published by the Committee on Modern Foreign Languages in Public Schools in Cincinnati, Ohio). I quote here items that would apply also to other foreign languages: "Because of the ever increasing importance of a knowledge of modern foreign languages. Because the study of a foreign language leads to a better understanding of our native tongue, English. Because the acquisition of a foreign language is in later life a difficult undertaking, while in childhood, when the vocal organs are most flexible and the memory most retentive, languages can be learned with comparative ease."

From William A. Cooper's *The Ideals of the Profession* (*Modern Language Journal* for October, 1917) I quote a few salient statements: "The time in life when it is easiest to learn modern foreign languages is early childhood. Isn't it strange that this fact, so well known to the world as well as to educators, is not reflected in the course of study of our schools? . . . Instead of giving children the one important thing they could most easily learn, while young, viz. a modern foreign language, but which they will find more and more difficult the older they grow, we give them some other things which are hardest in childhood and easiest later on. . . . Perhaps I ought to say in this connection that the foreign language instruction I am advocating for elementary schools is intended for American children, not for children of foreigners."

In *Education* for September, 1917, Charles W. Super, in *Foreign Languages in our Public Schools* urges Latin as the most important language because it is fundamental for so many things in our modern life. Most of our readers will not agree with the author when he says: "The practical value of any language other than English is very slight in the United States." From the foreign commercial point of view he mentions as the most useful Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian.

Concerning the comparative value of the study of Latin and modern languages we find an interesting contribution in *School and Society* for July 14, 1917, entitled *Does the Study of High-School Latin Improve High-School English?* by Myron J. Wilcox. In view of the assertion often made that students who have had Latin are better students afterwards, the writer contends that this is because only the stronger students venture to undertake the study of Latin. By studying the high school record (for first, second, third, and fourth year) of students taking German and of students who chose Latin, he finds that the grades of the former were lower in the first year than those of students who then began the study of Latin; further, there is no marked change in the general grade-average from year to year during the four years either in the group of those electing German or of those electing Latin. Similar scrutiny was also given to records of students who had had less than four years of language.

In *Monatshefte für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik* for September, 1917, Anton Appelman (*The Essentials of the Direct Method*) calls attention to the fact that even the native teacher easily drops into certain provincialisms, and

the writer correctly asserts that for each foreign language there should (in instructional work) be but one standard of pronunciation. Appellmann thereupon gives an outline of what, in his opinion, the essentials of the direct method are: much use of grammar in talking rather than the giving of grammatical rules, confining oneself to the essentials, but learning them thoroughly, free composition, thorough discussion in the foreign language of the assigned lesson before the daily reading is taken up, intelligent reading as the center of instruction, ample use of Realien, some use of translation (especially for more advanced work and for difficult passages; translation to be as literal as possible, and as free as necessary), no black-board work (instructor must correct all written work at home).

In the *Educational Review* for November, 1917, there is a study by Clarence Paschall entitled *Modern Language Study*. He indicates why the study of Greek and Latin once held such sway, and points out that modern languages have now stepped into their place not because they have as yet proven their worth, but because it was natural that they should succeed those languages. The argument for the cultural value of modern languages is now no longer placed first. Yet their utilitarian value is in fact weak, largely theoretical, and affects only few students. "The truth is that modern language study must justify itself, as language study has always justified itself, mainly through its cultural and disciplinary value." Owing to the growing use of a sane direct method the author is hopeful of success for modern language work. The writer points out that reading ability develops faster than speaking ability and that to some extent the tendency in direct method work is for the former to be unduly slowed up in advanced classes because of the latter. He also charges that it is a fact that grammar is to a certain extent neglected, and that when not neglected—except for elementary work—it is apt to become as much of a bore as ever. Finally there are some interesting, and in part valuable, details on teaching syntax with an appeal to reason rather than to memory or imitation.

In a paper entitled *Redemption through Realien* in the *Educational Review* for November, 1917, Frank R. Arnold urges the use of many and good Realien. He stresses particularly the use of posters and pictures, newspapers (both magazines and dailies), and foreign-published texts (for display). Emphasis is placed on the need for teachers of foreign languages to keep well acquainted with the life of the foreign country concerned. Teachers are urged to make a collection, as time goes on, of Realien, a sort of a "museum,"—post cards and other pictures, wedding invitations, theater programs, wooden shoes, business letters, photos, maps, books, and even bric-a-brac. The writer thinks that proper attention to Realien will result in greater practical as well as cultural value for the study.

In the *Educational Review* for October, 1917, Gary C. Meyers (*The Examination and the Learner*) urges frequent unannounced tests with a limited time for writing (3-10 minutes). The papers should be returned promptly, to make the tests more effective. In respect to subject-matter the tests should overlap, so that things once asked might be asked again. The writer does not believe

in final tests. A suggestion as to *Quick Correction of Quiz Papers* is found in the *Modern Language Journal* for October, 1917 (author's name not mentioned). Confronted by large classes and a heavy schedule, the writer found it impossible to correct all papers, and had to work out a system for self-correction in class by the students. "They almost never skip an error, because they know that if I find an error which they have overlooked, I take off 20 per cent" (twice the original 10 per cent). Another writer in a recent pedagogical article insists that students find great difficulty in seeing their own mistakes.

Welcome studies for publication could be written for each of the Scandinavian languages on a subject similar to that of L. H. Péchin's *The Place of Poetry in the Teaching of French* in the *Modern Language Journal* for October, 1917.

In the September number of *Monatshefte für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik* we find the conclusion of John C. Weigel's *Qualitative vs. Quantitative Standards*. Speaking of what can be done with the best students, he suggests (well-advised) promotion or the formation of "flying sections," the formation of which would be especially easy where over-large sections have to be reduced. In speaking of the poor students, he believes that students fail because the quantity of work is too great for them or because they do not know how to study; the immediate result in both cases is lack of interest. "But we also do too much hearing of recitations and too little teaching, i.e., showing students how to attack a given piece of work." Weigel recommends placing the poorest students into a section by themselves; he also suggests supervised study for these. Special emphasis is given to the need of (1) a greater number of exercises about essentials and omission of extraneous materials likely to confuse, (2) supervised study, (3) smaller classes; at the University (of Chicago) High School 16-17 students to a class seems to be the average for modern language work.

Our teachers of Scandinavian, especially those having classes that contain also pupils who do not know any Scandinavian, should see to it that they get the linguistic view-point of the American student. It is frequently difficult for a teacher who has not had to learn the language and the grammar from a foreign view-point to present the grammar in a clear and simple way; no doubt there are also such teachers who rely chiefly on their own speaking knowledge,—a condition which should be remedied. Our teachers of Scandinavian extraction (in high schools there are no other teachers of Scandinavian, I believe) should bear in mind Marian T. Whitney's statement in *Monatshefte für deutsche Sprache und Pädagogik* for October, 1917 (*The American-Born Teacher of Modern Languages*): "Men and women of foreign birth have done and are doing fine work in teaching their mother tongue in our schools and colleges. We owe them much and shall probably long need their help, but in the countries where education has reached the highest development, in France as well as in Germany, it has been found that the best teachers of foreign languages are those who have themselves had to acquire their knowledge by hard study, those who know the difficulties which must be surmounted before a pupil can gain the power to use the language freely, who are not disheartened by the slowness and blundering

of the early stages and who also know what the cultural value of the language and literature they are teaching may be to those of their own nationality and education." The writer seems entirely to have ignored, however, an important difference in conditions here and in Europe. Our American born teachers of foreign extraction are at least in some respects differently predisposed from foreign-born teachers (in America or in the European countries with which the author makes comparison). For Scandinavian, it might be desirable to call attention to the fact that the usual situation in high schools is for an American-born teacher of foreign extraction to be teaching American-born students of similar foreign extraction. Such a teacher, naturally having linguistic tendencies similar to those of his students, will have to make careful and intensive studies of the language concerned and from the proper view-point, if anything worth while is to be accomplished.

The October (1917) number of the *Modern Language Journal* contains *Literature of Modern Language Methodology in America for 1916* by Carl A. Krause, with a total of 69 items by 59 different writers.

Attention should be called to *Suggestions and References for Modern Language Teachers*, Second edition, revised and enlarged, by Thomas Edward Oliver (Bulletin No. 18 of University of Illinois School of Education, University of Illinois Bulletin, XIV, 43, 1917, pp. 84, 25 cents). The work consists almost wholly of bibliographies helpful in the study and teaching of French, German, and Spanish. In the preface the author says: "Owing to the fact that . . . Norwegian and Swedish . . . have as yet little place in the secondary school curriculum, the editor has not felt the need of including them in this second edition, despite several requests to do so. Perhaps the need of such inclusion will become more imperative later." Nevertheless teachers of Scandinavian will find several of the bibliographical lists helpful, especially those dealing with methods of teaching, as well as what there is of general comment. The pamphlet deals with the following subjects: *The Training of the Teacher* (Opportunities for travel and study, Books of travel, Political histories, Methods of teaching modern languages, Books on phonetics and other aids to correct pronunciation, Histories of literature, Journals for the teacher, Dictionaries, Grammar and supplementary grammatical aids, Miscellaneous reference books), *The Teacher in the Class Room* (Newspapers and periodicals for class room use or for outside reading, Illustrative material, Outline courses and examinations), *The Teacher outside the Class Room* (Songs, Games, School Theatricals, Reading outside the class room, International correspondence between schools, School libraries), *Appendix* (Addresses of American dealers, publishers and importers mentioned in the bulletin, Addenda, Index). In the *Editorial* in Volume IV, 3 of *Scandinavian Studies and Notes* I have pointed out the need of bibliographical helps of this type for the use of our teachers of Scandinavian. We hope that some of our contributors will undertake this most important task; bibliographies (and any other helpful comment) for any one of the Scandinavian languages or for any special phase of one of the languages would be welcome.

A. LOUIS ELMQUIST.

November, 1917.